

Residential Food Scraps Collection & Composting

Expanding Beyond the Pilot - Perspectives and Lessons Learned



CAMBRIDGE
DEPARTMENT
OF PUBLIC
**THE
WORKS**



Ms. Randi Mail, Recycling Director, City of Cambridge



Eligible residents received

Curbside bin ([Orbis 280A and 285](#))

Kitchen bin

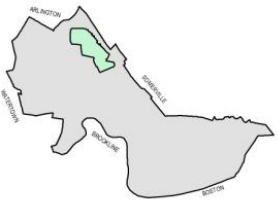
([BioBag MaxAir](#), then [Mattiussi Ecologia Umimax](#))

Compostable bags ([Biobags](#))

Instructions

Coupon

Free weekly pickup



- ✗ No liquids (i.e. grease or soup). Pour grease in a can, refrigerate and place in trash when full.
- ✗ No plastic bags, plastics or Styrofoam
- ✗ No metal, glass or wood
- ✗ No diapers or baby wipes
- ✗ No pet or human waste
- ✗ No cigarette butts
- ✗ No dryer lint or dryer sheets

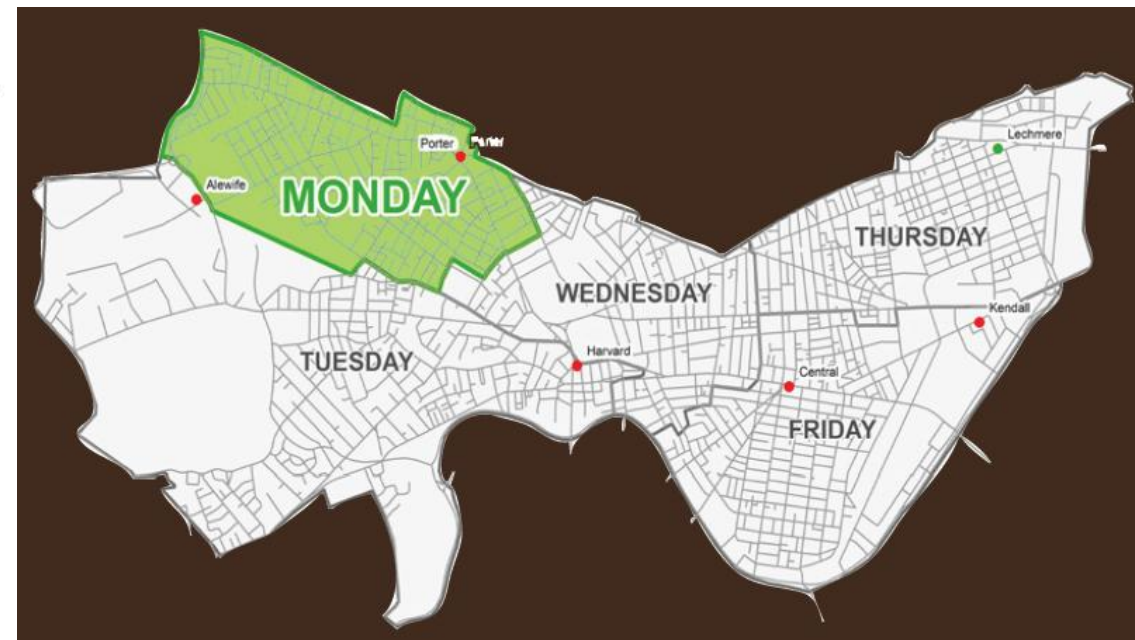
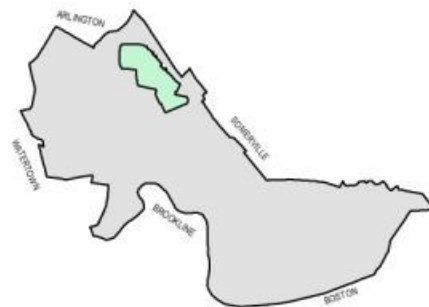
Pilot Results

April 2014 - Sept 2015

Green bins given by request
30% eligible residences participated
83% avg setout rate
6.5 lbs/HH/wk, 600 HHs
up to 35% trash reduction per HH
95% satisfaction rate

Since Oct 2015 expansion...

Green bins given to all
48% avg setout rate, 5200 eligible HHs
2.4 lbs/HH/wk, 10 lbs/bin/wk



Lessons Learned

1. Key Messages

Reduce waste, protect climate & control trash costs

It's easy and convenient (weekly, same collection day, free supplies)

Amazing how little trash remains (every bit counts avg 2-7 lbs/HH/wk)

Reducing waste is even better than composting (make it last, portion & plan, love you leftovers)

2 PLACE BAGGED FOOD SCRAPS
IN YOUR CURBSIDE BIN



A.Aroyan Photography

CambridgeMA.Gov/iReport/MissedPickup

Lessons Learned

2. Fostering Behavior Change

Instructions clear and simple
(photos, translations)

Extensive door to door effort

Most of your neighbors participating
and very satisfied

Recycling was once new 25 years ago

Understand concerns, no stereotypes
(backyard composting, FWDs, odor)

Close the loop: finished compost
available for gardens



Lessons Learned

3. Addressing the “Yuck” Factor

Ventilated kitchen system

New bag every 2-3 days

No liquids, drain moisture

Wrap meat/fish scraps

Store KB in fridge/freezer
warm weather especially

Vinegar trap for fruit flies



Lessons Learned

4. Bags – Benefits & Considerations

Reduce moisture 30% - avoided tip fees
(water vapor transfer rate differs among bags)

Curbside bins cleaner and more pleasant to use when shared

Reduces yuck factor, retains participation

Checkout bag ordinance

Retail availability, coupons, produce bags



Lessons Learned

5. Operations

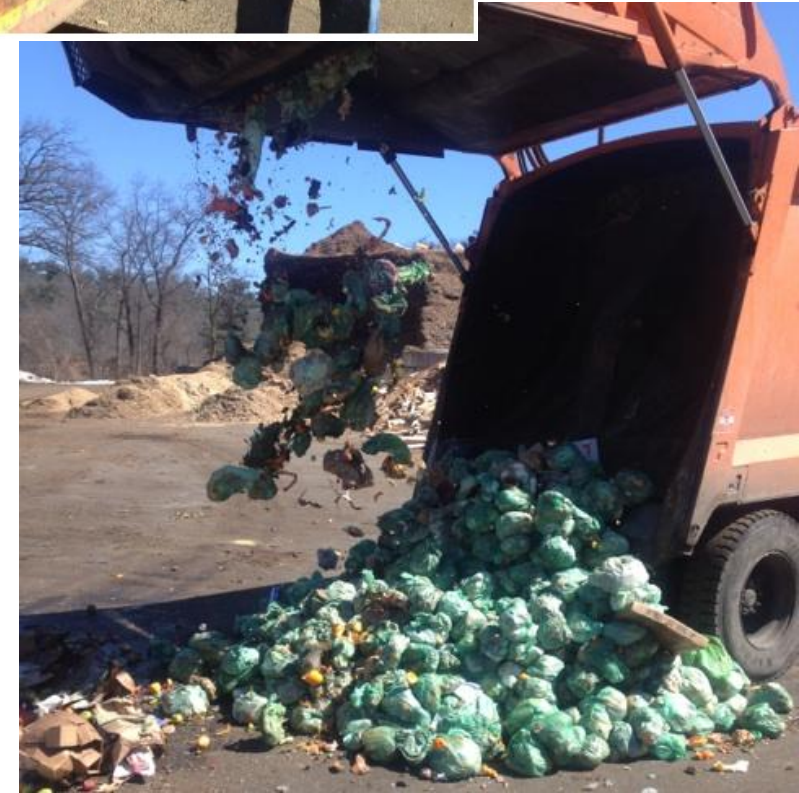
Voluntary sign-up vs. green bins for all

Missed pickups plan

Bioware OK vs. simple info for general public

Policies to maximize participation, efficiency, convenience and minimize cost

Collection efficiencies in future?



Lessons Learned

6. Feedback & Surveys

Performance & tips

Demographics

Changes in generation of household “waste”

Kitchen bins, compostable bags & green bins

Cooking, shopping, leftovers, wasting

Odors, fruit flies and rodents



FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STORAGE GUIDE



INSIDE THE FRIDGE

- Apples, berries, and cherries
- Grapes, kiwi, lemons, and oranges
- Nectarines, apricots, peaches, and plums (after ripening at room temperature)
- Avocados, pears, tomatoes (after ripening at room temperature)
- Almost all vegetables and herbs

OUTSIDE THE FRIDGE

- Bananas, mangos, papayas, and pineapples: store in a cool place
- Potatoes / onions: store in a cool, dark place
- Basil and winter squashes: store at room temperature—once cut, store squashes in fridge

MORE STORAGE TIPS

- If you like your fruit at room temperature, take what you will eat for the day out of the fridge in the morning.
- Many fruits give off gases that hasten the spoilage of other produce. Store bananas, apples, and tomatoes by themselves and store fruits and vegetables in different bins.
- Check out storage bags and containers designed to help extend the life of your produce.
- To prevent mold, wash berries just before eating.

FOR MORE TIPS VISIT: <http://makedirtnotwaste.org/prevent-wasted-food>
LEARN HOW TO STORE WITHOUT PLASTIC: <http://ecologycenter.org/factsheets/veggie-storage.pdf>



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CambridgeMA.Gov/CompostPickup

[2015 Pilot Project Report](#)

